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THE SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-first year

Letter dated 28 October 1996 from the Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the text of a statement issued on 28 October 1996 by the Presidency of the European Union on the subject of the situation in Afghanistan (see annex).

I would be grateful if you could have the text of the present letter and its annex circulated as an official document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 39, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) John H. F. CAMPBELL
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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ANNEX

[Original: English and French]

Statement issued on 28 October 1996 by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union on the situation in Afghanistan

The European Union is deeply concerned at the intensification of armed hostilities in Afghanistan. The European Union calls for the immediate cessation of these hostilities to prevent further destruction and loss of life, and strongly urges all parties to seek a peaceful settlement through negotiation that will ultimately result in a political solution that would bring peace and stability to Afghanistan.

The European Union fully supports the efforts of the United Nations Special Mission to Afghanistan and calls upon all Afghan parties to cooperate closely with the Special Mission which is uniquely placed to act as an impartial mediator in the search for peace. In this context, the European Union welcomes the continuation of consultations by the Special Mission with neighbouring and other countries and regional institutions.

The European Union reaffirms its strong commitment to the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and national unity of Afghanistan, and urges all States to refrain from interfering in the internal affairs of Afghanistan. In particular the flow of arms and ammunition into Afghanistan from outside its borders must end without delay. It also appeals to the Afghan parties to stop the use of landmines in view of the high number of innocent civilians falling victim to these weapons.

Of particular concern to the European Union is the widespread violation of human rights in Afghanistan, especially discrimination against women and girls. The European Union recalls, in this context, Security Council resolution 1076 (1996) in which the Council denounced such discrimination as well as other violations of human rights in Afghanistan. The European Union strongly urges the leaders of the various factions in Afghanistan to respect and act in accordance with the principles laid down in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Charter of the United Nations, as well as all the other conventions on human rights to which Afghanistan is a signatory.

As one of the leading contributors of humanitarian aid to Afghanistan, the European Union is concerned about the possible repercussions of human rights violations on the beneficiaries of European Union relief programmes in Afghanistan. The European Union looks forward to a dialogue with all the parties concerned on cooperation modalities that aim to ensure the delivery of aid whilst maintaining the quality of support already provided to the people of Afghanistan, irrespective of their gender and ethnic background.

The European Union notes with concern that the continuation of the conflict in Afghanistan increases the potential for international terrorism and drug trafficking with destabilising effects for the region and beyond. The European Union therefore calls upon all parties in Afghanistan to halt such activities on Afghan soil.